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JAPONICA.

I. WILD animals have always been looked at with a kind of fear by people of a low civilization. Hence the custom, so far spread over the whole earth, of addressing those animals, not with their proper name, — for “quand on parle de loup !” — but rather with some pet or honorific name, to win by politeness their favor. Cf. Grimm, “Reinhart Fuchs,” pp. liii.–lvi. ; “Deutsche Mytholog.,” 4th ed., vol. ii., p. 556 ; Haupt, “Ztschrft. f. deutsches Alterthum,” xii. (1865), p. 214. Should not a remark of the *Wa-gun no shiwori*, “Guide to the Japanese Language,” by *Tani-gawa-si-sei*, belong to this place ? There we read (Pfizmaier, “Sitzungsberichte d. Kais. Akad. d. W. zu Wien,” 1875, vol. lxxx. p. 442) : *I-ga-ta-u-me* means “the old woman of *I-ga*.” They say it means the fox. In *Kodzuke* the word *musume*, “daughter,” has the meaning of *nezumi*, “mouse.” (Pfizmaier, “Sitzungsberichte,” etc., vol. lxxxiv., p. 73.)

The reason is that most of them are thought to possess supernatural power ; the wolf, for instance, to assume different forms, “with which magical power the fact seems to be connected, that in other stories he deceives people, without any charm, by a mere disguise.” (Grimm, “Reinhart Fuchs,” p. xxxvii. Comp. also Emil Jung, “Vhndl. Berl., G. f. Anthropol.,” etc., 1877, p. 337.) The same belief seems to exist in Japan regarding the fox (*kitsune*), who, on the whole, “bears not the very best character among the Japanese. The peasantry believe him to be in league with all evil spirits and devils, and to be himself the very incarnation of craft, malice, and wickedness.”¹ (MacFarlane, “Japan,” 1852, New York, p. 251.) Hence the saying : *Kitsune ga tsukita*, “possessed by a fox” (Hepburn, Jap. Dict., 2d ed., p. 563^a ; Pfizmaier, “Sitzungsberichte d. Kais. Ak. d. W. z. Wien” (1878), vol. xc. p. 86) ; and the *Wagun shiwori* tells us (Pfizmaier, “Sitzungsberichte,” etc., vol. xcii. p. 59) that the farmers offer sacrifices to the “god of the three foxes” (*mi-ketsu no kami*). His power of transformation seems to be alluded to in a passage of the *I-ro-ha-bunko*, by *Tamenaga Shunsui*, a novel, which gives a detailed account of the story of the 47 rô-nin (for a general outline see Mitford, “Tales of Old Japan,” vol. i. p. 1 ff.). There *Shosayemon*, one of the 47, fallen in love with a girl, and entirely forgetting his duty, as a faithful and loyal vassal, to revenge the enforced suicide of his master, passes his time at the house of his sweetheart. When evening comes they retire, and while now both are lying on the couch, it occurs to *Shosaye-*

¹ It is interesting to compare Dennis, *The Folk-Lore of China*, London, 1876, p. 95 : “When the Pilgrim Fathers landed in Massachusetts they found the Indians, especially those of Narragansett, deeply imbued with fox superstition.”

mon's mind, in his happiness, that all that might only be a delusion of hell, and he, half-doubting and half-joking, addresses the girl (*I-ro-ha-bunko*, chap. 3 [=vol. i. fol. 29^r, line 4, of the edition Yedo, 1836]): "O! Miss *Oyasu*! you are a fox, are you not? (*Kō, Oyasan, omaye-tachi na kitsune ja, neika?*)"

2. The *Wa-gun no shiwori*, mentioned above, gives also a number of other interesting particulars regarding Japanese customs, etc. Pfizmaier, "Sitzungsberichte d. Kais. Akad. d. W. zu Wien" (1878), vol. xc. p. 35: *imu-tefu tsuki* means "the moon which, as they say, is avoided." It is said: People avoid to look at the moon in solitary reflections. Also, in the poems of the Chinese poet *Pe-lō-thien*, it is said: In the light of the moon do not think of the past. It spoils your features, it diminishes your years.

Ibid. p. 56: *Kaka-fa* means "a piece of torn silk which is useless." . . . If one adds a piece in making straw shoes, they will be solid. They call it *kaka-fa-nara-utsu*, "torn-silk-straw-shoe." If the foot of one walking has been cut by anything, they twist these remaining pieces, hold them near the fire, and warm the wound with them. This they call *kaka-fa-bi*, "torn-silk-fire."

Ibid. p. 64: *Kasasagi no fasi*, "bridge of the jay," is in poems often read in connection with *tana-bata*, "Weaver-maiden."¹ On the 7th day of the 7th month of the year the jay forms with its wings a bridge over the river of heaven (the Milky Way), and suffers the "Weaver-maiden" to pass. . . . The matter refers to a passage of the book *Hoai-nan-tse*. See Chamberlain, "The Classical Poetry of the Japanese," London, 1880, pp. 90, 91, for the stars of the Weaver-maiden.

Ibid. p. 78: *Kame no ura-gushi*, "The skewer of divination of the tortoise (shell)." Three skewers are put into a box, and, if anything is to be undertaken, driven out by force (*oshi-idashi*), and so fortune and misfortune is foretold.

Ibid. p. 87: *Kane-utsu*, which means "to strike or ring the bells," is used with reference to the oath. It is said that in taking an oath, men strike upon the sword; women strike upon the looking-glass.

Pfizmaier, "Sitzungb. d. Kais. Akad. d. W. zu Wien" (1878), vol. xcii. p. 28: In the long poems of the "*Ko-kon-siū*" we find, "The quadrupeds will have barked in the clouds." This refers to an old story of the king of *Hoai-nan*, whose hens and dogs tasted of the medicine of the immortals, and flew up to the cloud-seats.

Ibid. p. 28: *Kedzuri-bana*, "cut or shaving flowers," are artificial flowers, which on the 15th day of the beginning of the spring are made out of willow twigs, and fastened above the doors and gates of

¹ *Tana-bata*, the Weaver, or star Vega, near the Milky Way, worshipped on the 7th day of the 7th month. — HEPBURN.

the halls. The same thing is called *kedzuri-ki* (scraped tree) in the *Kagerô-nikki*. Nowadays it is the custom of the inhabitants of Ye-zo, if a man dies, to inter his body and to fasten willow twigs over the grave. The ends of them are sharpened so as to become similar to the grass-flower. It is said that they also form an offering, if they sacrifice to the demons.

Ibid. p. 34: The inhabitants of the island of Ye-zo blow something out of their mouth which is like fog, and so darken the sky. This is witchcraft.

Ibid. p. 48: *Koma*¹ *no tsumadzuki*, "the stumbling of the foal," refers to the proverb, If a person is loved by any one, the foal, on which he is riding, stumbles.

Ibid. p. 81: *Shiwo-shiru* means "salt-juice." It is said in the "Continuation of the Nippon-ki:" "They bowed in the vestibule, according to the custom, in the direction of the four quarters of the heaven and of the earth, and mutually they drank salt-juice." This is thought to be an old custom of taking one's oath upon an agreement. Also, in the "Particular Divine Record," it is said: "According to *Toyo-tama-fiko's* command, they gave him salt-water. He drank it and said: 'If I break this oath may I never again eat salt!'" This was originally the custom of the island of *Tsusi-ma*. Afterwards it was observed in the whole world. It is thought that what nowadays is called *ushiwo-chigiri*, "sea-water agreement," is the same thing. Compare the Hebrew בְּרִית מֶלַח (*berith mälakh*), Num. xviii. 19; 2 Chron. xiii. 5, "a covenant of salt," and Levit. ii. 13, "And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering:" also the Greek ἀλῶν κοινωνεῖν; ἄλας καὶ τράπεζαν παραβαίνειν, etc.

Pfizmaier, "Sitzungsb.," vol. lxxxiv. p. 37: According to the *Pöwen-lö*, the rainbow is nothing but the image of the sun in the rain. According to other "records," it is the air spit out by toads; a man of the *oka* family of *Bi-chiû* told that he had seen that with his eyes.

Ibid. p. 38: *Niwa-bi*, "fire of the court." In celebrating the marriage it is now customary to kindle a fire in the vestibule when (the bride) leaves the sedan-chair. It is said, in mentioning this custom, that it is not right, because it bears resemblance to the funeral rites. In the (Chinese) "History of the North" we read, where the customs of Japan are spoken of: If the girl enters the house of the man, she must step over a fire. Not before she has done this is she allowed to see the man.

Ibid. p. 85: They say: If a man is drowned in the lake *Su-wa* in *Shina-no*, a cock is placed into a basket, which is drawn over the water. Where the cock crows, there the corpse will be found.

¹ *Koma* is *Ko-uma*, "little horse," l. l. p. 46.

3. In the *Çakuntala* we read (p. 20, line 4, ed. Williams, = p. 8, line 18, ed. Böhtlingk) : " This hermitage is undisturbed by passion, and yet my arm throbs," where Williams notes : A quivering sensation of the right arm was supposed to prognosticate union with a beautiful woman. See *Raghu-van'sa*, xii. 90, Bhaṭṭi I., 27 ; *Vikramorva'sī*, Act 2.¹ With this belief compare the Japanese *uta* : —

My brows itch, I sneeze, the ribbon has given way ;
Will he wait, whom I desire to see once, my master ?

(*Wa-gun no shiwori.*)

(Pfizmaier, " Sitzungsber.," etc., vol. lxxxiv. p. 52.)

4. She (= Damayantī) saw all the gods free from sweat, *unwinking*, having unwithered garlands . . . by his *winking eyes* the prince of the Nishadhans (= Nala) was indicated. Story of Nala and Damayantī, iv., 23, 24.

In a Chinese work we read : " In *Kuang-tscheu* rich men have frequently demon-slaves. Of them there is a tribe which dwells near the ocean. They dive into the water with *unwinking eyes*. They are called 'slaves of the *Kuen-lün* mountain.' " (*Wa-gun no shiwori*). Pfizmaier, " Sitzungsber.," etc., vol. xcii. p. 23.

Hanns Oertel.

NEW HAVEN.

¹ Comp. H. L. Fleischer, *Ueber das vorbedeutende Gliederzucken bei den Morgenlaendern*. Leipz., 1849.